

VISIT...

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EXPLODING FROM THE MIGHTY WORLD OF MARVEL...

MARVEL

NO. 2



February
1985

Captain BRITAIN

U.S. \$1.75
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50¢

**CRAZY
GANG
RULES!**





MEMO: BACK ISSUES

THE MIGHTY WORLD OF MARVEL

Marvel, UK's newest monthly comic Magazine
Published with Full Colour Comic Strip

ISSUE 1
Cover Mounted Button Badge. Contents: X-Men v The Sentinels by Byrne & Austin, Vision & Scarlet Witch in 'Faith of Our Fathers'. An illustrated history of Comics by Frank 'Powerglove' Miller. The comic printing on the issue is of register, hence the price of

ISSUE 2
The X-Men by Byrne & Austin. Contents: The Vision & The Scarlet Witch star in 'Faith of Our Fathers'. 52 pages for

ISSUE 3
X-Men in 'Demon' by Byrne & Austin. News by Frank Powerglove and Vision/Witch in 'Blood Brothers'. 52 pages

ISSUE 4
X-Men 'Even in Death'. Vision/Witch in 'Please allow me to introduce myself'. 52 pages

ISSUE 5
Wherever by Frank Miller and X-Men by Cockburn and Rubenstein. 52 pages

ISSUE 6
Wherever & X-Men continue. 52 pages

ISSUE 8
Daredevil merges with M.W.O.M. The new Captain Britain trades and the M.W.O.M. composition is changed to part colour, part due tone, part black and white. Contents are: Wherever by Miller, Captain Britain by Alan Moore & Alan Davis, Marvel Showcase, Night Raven, Letters, and Zone reviews. 52 pages

ISSUE 9
Captain Britain, Cloak & Dagger, Night Raven Showcase etc. 52 pages

ISSUE 10
Cover Mounted Button Badge. Cloak & Dagger, Captain Britain continues with 'Anarchy in the UK', plus Showcase Art & Night Raven. 52 pages

ISSUE 11
Captain Britain, Cloak & Dagger, Violence in Comics by Pete Scott. 52 pages

ISSUE 12
Cloak & Dagger the Conclusion. Captain Britain, Night Raven. 52 pages

ISSUE 13
X-Men and Micronauts combine at the start of a new black-and-white adventure. Plus Captain Britain in 'A Funeral on Otherworld'. Fanzone reviews and Pete Scott on Art Communism in early Marvel plus free stickers. 52 pages

ISSUE 14
Captain Britain, Red Moon Rising Art Showcase

THE DAREDEVILS

Published for one year by Marvel, issues available and contents are as follows —

ISSUE 1
The New Captain Britain in 'A Rag, A Bone, A Hank of Hair' by Alan Moore and Alan Davis. Inside Comics — An appreciation of Frank Miller by Alan Moore. Daredevil in 'Marked for Murder' by Roger McKenzie and Frank Miller. Full colour Q&A by Gary Leach plus fanzone reviews, news feature and Spiderman Strip

ISSUE 2
The New Captain Britain continues as does Frank Miller's Daredevil. Editorially we have Convention report, fanzone reviews, news feature, the early work of Jerry Fara and full colour pin-up poster of Spiderman by Paul Neary

ISSUE 3
Captain Britain in 'Thicker Than Water'. Daredevil Fights, with Bullseye in 'To Dare the Devil' plus all the usual features including July Gen, and a feature on Stan Lee

ISSUE 4
Captain Britain in 'Killing Ground'. Daredevil in 'Blind Alley'. Sexism in Comics, your letters and part 2 of 'Blinded by the Hate' — an affectionate look at Stan Lee

ISSUE 6
Captain Britain, Sexism in Comics, letters, Showcase Comics, fanzone reviews, Night Raven Returns, colour poster, Daredevil by Frank Miller etc

ISSUE 7
Captain Britain, Daredevil, Japanese Comics, Night Raven and all the usual departments

ISSUE 10
Captain Britain in 'The Sound and the Fury', Night Raven, full colour comic, Daredevil by Frank Miller in 'Devils', in which Bullseye sees Daredevil every where

ISSUE 11
Captain Britain 'But They Never Really Die'. News feature looks at SF Quest, fanzone reviews, collecting comic terminology, Night Raven, full colour pin-up and Miller's Daredevil continues

Missed any issues of Marvel Magazines on the news stands recently? If you have, do not despair, for hope is at hand. In conjunction with Marvel (UK) we've amassed a warehouse of stock and now have many groaning shelves of back issues waiting to find needy homes. Check out these lists: read the ordering information: let us know what you need: and leave the rest to us:

RAMPAGE MONTHLY

ran for several years as a black and white reprint monthly magazine. It represented many classic Marvel Series before its end, and was a separate title in 1982.

2 The Hulk and the original X-Men by Walt Simonson, The Defenders and Nova

3 Hulk and Metal Master plus Defenders and Nova

5 Hulk v Sub-Warrior plus Defenders and Nova

7 Hulk, Defenders, Dr. Strange

8 New X-Men commence with Dave Cockrum art plus interview with Lou Ferrigno and Hulk and Dr. Strange

9 Hulk and Avengers, New X-Men, Dr. Strange

10 Hulk, Dr. Strange, New X-Men

11 Cyclops confronts Havok and Phoenix 17 New X-Men v Sentinels

19 Enter the Phoenix 31 Who Will Scape the Juggernaut

21 Hulk, New X-Men, Dr. Strange

22 Phoenix Unleashed

26 John Byrne art starts on New X-Men in Amargosa Inn

28 Thing v Thing by Byrne, plus New X-Men and Luke Cage

29 X-Men, Cage, Thing

30 Magneto Triumphs

31 Showdown by Byrne and Austin

32 X-Men in The Savage Land

33 X-Men Against Sauron

35 Thing and Spidey in Starlin's Thanks/Warlock epic

37 Thing v Deathlok plus X-Men

40 X-Men, Thing and New UK strip Timeslasher

41 Arcades Murderworld

42 Timeslasher, Thing X-Men

43 Phoenix

44 Mutual X

45 Not Just X-Men by Byrne but now Byrne's Iron Fist too

46 Really Good Will

47 X-Men, Fiat and Thing by Dry and Perez

48 The Hellfire Club

49 Thing and Warlock

50 Wolverine Alone

52 Heroes and Hellfire

53 Dark Phoenix

54 Final Issue! New X-Men by John Byrne continues, plus The Thing and Colour poster of Daredevil

MARVEL SUPERHEROES

was a monthly comic starring the Mighty Avengers, X-Men, Champions and other Teams of Superheroes and from issue 377 on the absolutely new Captain Britain.

359 Avengers by Byrne, X-Men by Stanisko, article on Golden Age Hero the Black Marvel

360 Avengers, X-Men and Champions

361 Avengers by Perez, article on Golden Age Hero Iron Torch

362 Avengers and Guardians of the Galaxy

363 Avengers, X-Men and Champions

364 X-Men drawn by Neal Adams

365 The Sentinels Live

366 Enter Hawk

367 Champions in Battle of Los Angeles

368 In the Shadow of Sauron

369 The End... And Beginning

370 The Secret of Michael plus The Champions by Byrne as well as X-Men by Adams

371 Cataclysmic conclusion of the Michael Saga

372 Champions, Avengers and X-Men

373 Swamp

374 Sunfire

375 Sunfire

376 Sentinels Hunt the Champions

377 The New Captain Britain Commences

378 Outlaw Civil

379 The Plan and the Power

380 The Red Guardian

381 Captain Britain in Re-Birth

382 Domestic Fortune by Chaykin

383 Elementary Dear Avengers

384 Evolutions Reprise

385 Captain Britain in Attack of the Binary Beings

386 Avengers v The Grey Gargoyle

388 Captain Britain enters 'a Crocod

389 Dr. Strange by Marshall Rogers & Terry Austin

390 Avengers by Perez

391 Iron Fist and Captain America by Byrne

392 Avengers, Prelude of The War Devil

393 MSM incorporates Rampage and we learn The Fate of The Phoenix

394 The X-Men/Phoenix Saga continues

395 X-Men and Avengers

396 X-Men co-starring Alpha Flight

397 Final Issue! X-Men and Alpha Flight, Face Wendigo, Avengers in The Evil Reborn

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And orf we go with *Captain Britain* Monthly, Number Two. This month, the good Captain tangles with old adversaries, The Crazy Gang – crooks who are to crime what Inspector Clouseau is to detection. Normally, such incompetent skulduggery would present no problem to Captain Britain – however, there are complications...

Other original material this issue has *The Free-Fall Warriors* seemingly determined to blast each other off the face of Warworld before they've even had a chance to say hello, and *Paragon*-fan Jonah Pringle goes off in search of a new physique, a new life-style... and a new nose.

Local comics cognoscente will no doubt be aware that the *Abslom Daak* and *Night Raven* strips are reprint stories, but we make no apologies for showing again these early works of Mr. Moore, Mr. Dillon, Mr. Parkhouse and Mr. Lloyd. Apart from representing interesting and important evolutionary landmarks in their respective careers, they are also good stories!

Your views on all featured material will certainly be valued. You can air your opinions on our regular letters page, *Captain Britain Communications*, which will appear for the first time next month. More details appear on page 35, and on the same page, you'll find information concerning our subscriptions service.

Before then, of course, there's all of *Captain Britain* No.2 to read!

Editor: Ian Rimmer • Design: John Tomlinson •
Production: Tim Hampson and Alison Gill •
Advertising: Sally Benson (01-221 1232) •



Captain BRITAIN contents



CAPTAIN BRITAIN – A most unusual crime wave sweeps the nation in *Law and Disorder*P4

ABSLOM DAAK – DALEK KILLER – He's a death-dealer and a death-seeker all in one..... P16

NIGHT RAVEN – Night-time in the city, and a fascinating tale told without dialogueP20

PARAGON OF PAINTHORPE STREET – Text story, featuring Jonah Pringle and his fictional hero, Paragon.....P23

THE FREE-FALL WARRIORS – Explosive first encounters in *A Cat out of Hell*P26

(C.B. creators Alan and Jamie have asked us to pass on their thanks to Bob Napier and John McShane of A.K.A. Scots Comic Group for their hospitality at the recent Glasgow convention).



Captain BRITAIN

LAW & DISORDER

JAMIE DELANO & ALAN DAVIS
CO-CONSPIRATORS
AIDED AND ABETTED BY
STEVE CRADDOCK - LETTERER
CHRIS GILL - EDITOR







I DO LIKE THAT NICE JOHN WATT. NOT THAT NASTY MR. BARLOW. THOUGH, I AM GLAD THEY BROUGHT THIS BACK.



THE PEOPLE TALKED IN RIDDLES, BUT THE PICTURE-BOX GAVE HIM IDEAS...



IT WAS EASY, THE PICTURE-BOX HAD SHOWN HIM EXACTLY HOW TO DO IT.

FIRST THEY HAD TO RAM THE VAN WITH A CAR...

NOW!



...THEN THEY HAD TO MAKE THE GUARDS OPEN THE BACK, WHERE THEY WOULD FIND THE SACKS OF PAPER-POUNDS.







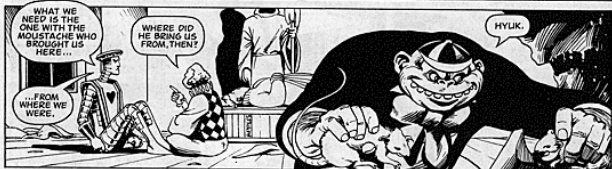
RESOURCES CONTROL EXECUTIVE HAS ASSUMED THE FUNCTION OF THAT SOMEWHAT HEAVY-HANDED AGENCY, S.T.R.I.K.E.

AGENT GABRIEL AND MYSELF ARE PART OF A TEAM OF SPECIALISTS. WE ARE GHOST GUERRILLAS. IF YOU LIKE, WE HAVE BEEN TRAINED TO FIGHT THESE MENACES.



WE HAVE LEARNED A GREAT DEAL SINCE THE DAYS OF S.T.R.I.K.E. - THE WORLD IS MUCH MORE FLUID NOW. WE HAVE SUBTLER METHODS. OUR STRATEGIES ARE OBLIQUE.

BUT WE MUST FUNCTION IN ISOLATION. THERE MUST BE NO INTERFERENCE FROM YOUR MEN, THOMAS.



WHAT WE NEED IS THE ONE WITH THE MOUSTACHE WHO BROUGHT US HERE...

WHERE DID HE BRING US FROM, THEN?

...FROM WHERE WE WERE.

HYUK.



IT WAS BETTER THERE. THE ONE WITH THE MOUSTACHE KNEW ALL THE THINGS TO DO. NOT LIKE YOU, YOU'RE USELESS.

HE'S DEAD THOUGH, ISN'T HE? HE BROUGHT US HERE AND DIED.

NOTHING MAKES SENSE HERE. WHY DID HE BRING US?



HE WAS A LEADER, THAT'S WHY.

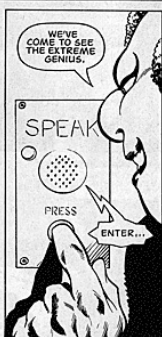
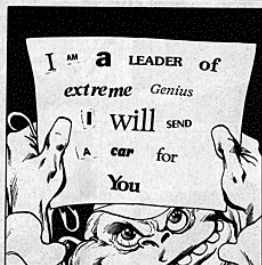
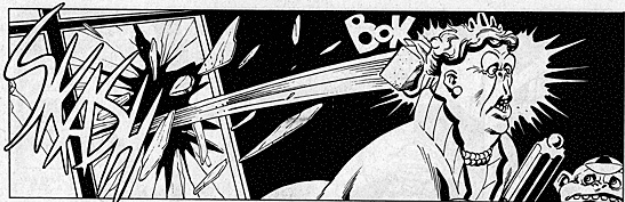
A LEADER, THAT'S WHAT THEY'RE CALLED. WE NEED A LEADER.

I TOLD YOU SO.



BUT WHERE ARE WE GOING TO GET ONE?









A SLOW, STRONG ANGER TURNED WITHIN HIM...



...AND GREW,



IT HAD TO BE THE CRAZY GANG. THIS ANARCHY HAD THEIR STAMP.



WHY HAD THEY NOT DISSOLVED WITH ALL THE OTHER FOUL CREATIONS OF THE JASPERS WARP?



THANK YOU,



"CAPTURE HIM.
DON'T KILL HIM."



CAREFULLY, DO NOT
DAMAGE OUR FRIEND, WE
HAVE MUCH TO TALK
ABOUT...



I AM NO "FRIEND" TO
CRIMINALS, AND NEITHER AM
I IN THE HABIT OF TALKING
TO "CATERpillARS."

IN THAT CASE,
PERHAPS IT IS TIME
TO PERFORM MY SMALL
METAMORPHOSIS.



SLAYMASTER!
YOU'RE FREE!



AS A BIRD,
CAPTAIN, AS
A BIRD.

WHEREAS
YOU, I'M
AFRAID, ARE
NOT.

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Abslom Daak DALEKOOO CCCCCKILLER

Script: Steve Moore

Art: Steve Dillon

ARRIVING AT THE PALACE OF PRINCESS
TAIYIN, DAAK FINDS THE BUILDING
UNDER HEAVY SIEGE ---

IF A SLIGHT
DISTURBANCE WERE TO
BREAK OUT AT THE
FRONT HERE -- HOW
SOON COULD YOU GET
ALL YOUR PEOPLE TO
SAFETY AT THE
BACK?

I...I
DON'T
KNOW!

THE 26TH CENTURY, BARTHMAN ABSLOM
DAAK, CONVICTED MURDERER, HAS BEEN
EXILED TO THE PLANET MAZAM, RECENTLY
CONQUERED BY THE DALEK EMPIRE. WITH NO
HOPE OF RETURN, HIS ONLY TASK IS TO KILL
AS MANY DALEKS AS HE CAN -- BEFORE
THEY KILL HIM ---

THEN
FIND OUT,
LADY!

AND...

UNDER
ATTACK!!
UNDER
ATTACK!

BALCONY:
VECTOR B57!
ONE HUMAN
ASSAILANT!

VA-BOMM!

HA! LOOK AT THE
HORRORS
SCATTER!

BUT NOT FOR LONG ---

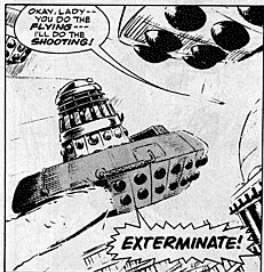
ALL UNITS
OPEN FIRE!

EXTERMINATE!
EXTERMINATE!!

FOR A TIMELESS TIME, A MOMENT CRYSTALLIZED IN ETERNITY, THERE IS ONLY
THIS --- DAAK THE DESTROYER, DEALING DEATH ---

SOMETHING HE WOULD GLADLY
WELCOME FOR HIMSELF AS WELL...

BLASTED LOUSY
SHOTS! THEY
HAVEN'T HIT ME
ONCE YET!!







BUT YOU REMEMBER...THE MEMORY'S
EATEN INTO YOUR SOUL AND
TURNED YOU INTO A KILLER...
BECAUSE THE GOOD TIMES
WENT BAD...

WHO
WAS
SHE?

NAME WAS SELENE--
AND THERE
WEREN'T
ANY GOOD
TIMES!

ONLY
BAD!



SO NOW YOU HATE
EVERYBODY!

SURE...
EVERYBODY!



...EXCEPT
HERE...

VA-KROOM!



AND THEN...

IT'LL TAKE A FEW HOURS ON FOOT...
BUT I'VE GOT A SPACE-YACHT HIDDEN
IN A CAVE-HANGAR IN THE HILLS... IF
WE CAN REACH THAT...

THEN FIND A PLANET
THAT'S FREE OF
THE DALEKS!

SEEMS I LIKE
YOUR HOME--
WORLD MORE
THAN YOU
DO!!

FORGET IT...
I'VE FOUND WHAT
I WAS ALWAYS
LOOKING FOR
RIGHT HERE!

A CHANCE TO
GET IT ALL
OVER WITH!



ALL RIGHT, DAAK, YOU
BRAINLESS IDIOT!
I KNOW WHERE WE
ARE---

AND I'LL TAKE
YOU TO WHAT
YOU WANT!



AND, OVER
THE NEXT
HILL...

THERE! THE DALEK'S BASE--
SHIP, WITH A CREW OF A
THOUSAND...

YOU CAN MAKE
ONE FUTILE, STUPID,
SUICIDAL ATTACK...AND
THROW YOUR
LIFE AWAY!!

NOW YOU'RE
TALKING,
LADY!!

Next: Deathwish!



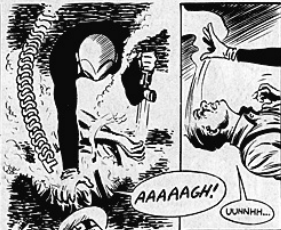
The Mysterious NIGHT-RAVEN

Script: Steve Parkhouse

Art: David Lloyd







Next: **Gang Rule!**



OVER WEIGHT? WROUGHT? THE HILL?



Episode 2

Paragon of Painthorpe Street

by Steve Alan Illustrations by Jeff Anderson

'Out - out - sped the fantastic figure... its mighty muscles launching it across an incredible distance...'

Jerry Siegel

Balding, dissipated and forty-eight, civil servant and comics fan Jonah Pringle is a man for whom life is not a barrel of merriment. When a colleague dies at his desk and Pringle is transferred away from the love of his life (beautiful, dark-eyed brunette Joan Riley, who has studiously avoided him for three years), Pringle is faced with two perplexing questions. 1. How would PARAGON, Gladiator, Paladin, Man of Tomorrow handle the situation? 2. Why is Eunice Cribble, his landlady, regarding him with a notable absence of pleasure?

"I suppose you've got some kind of excuse for being 'ome this early," said Eunice Cribble, darkly, blocking the doorway. We are all one, thought Pringle. We are all star-stuff, the fabric of the Cosmos. It didn't help. "I took a flexi-day, Mrs Cribble. Been feeling a bit weedy."

"Flexi-day? Flexi-day? My 'usband



never "ad any flexi days." She eyed him with stupid suspicion.

"The benefits of flexi-time are not best appreciated in the Postal Service, Mrs Cribble," said Pringle, a part of his mind agitated at his own impotence.

He slipped past her, wondering dimly if her sudden ire was perhaps the result of another die. This would mean that she limited herself to a menu of parsley sandwiches, which for some reason she seemed to regard as exceptionally health-giving. He might have endured this, but for her vile moods and her attempts to satisfy her appetite vicariously, plying him with meals of olympian proportions. A rotund man who piled on the pounds without any help from over-eating, Pringle found this behaviour a bit irksome. "She goes on a diet and I put on weight," he would occasionally say, quietly. In a darker mischievous moment Pringle had informed her that parsley was a cumulative poison, but with a single-mindedness born of profound stupidity, Eunice Cribble persisted.

None of this, however, concerned Pringle unduly as he spent the remainder of the day in his room, re-reading back numbers of *Paragon* and *Anakro the Unfrozen*, a clothes peg fastened on his chin in a hitherto unsuccessful attempt to cultivate a dimple. All the way home a plan had been percolating steadily at the back of his mind; a plan which had, coincidentally, reached fruition at exactly the moment he turned into the gate to meet the baleful glare of Eunice Cribble. He would, he decided, drink himself to death.

P ringle selected one final, farewell issue of *Paragon* to ease his passage into the infinite. It was number 428,

THE FIEND WITH MY FACE. Paragon's arch-enemy, Dex Dorbolak, had been struck by a hideously powerful meteorite, endowing him with the ability to absorb the strength and physical identity of any being in the universe, he had, of course, absorbed Paragon's para-powers, and proceeded to blaze a trail of devastation across America, tearing up railway lines, pushing over the Empire State Building and so on. When Paragon eventually confronted him, Dorbolak had pushed over a Pedasol factory onto the luckless superhero, burying him under thousands of tons of the substance to which he was most vulnerable. Cackling in what was most probably a nasal Hungarian accent, Dorbolak flew down to where the champion of freedom lay, helpless, only his head protruding from beneath the enormous building. "And

so to bed," said Dorbolak, cackling again. "And so to bed."

However, the diseased maniac's schemes had come to naught when Capitol City was suddenly hit by a thunderstorm. Dorbolak had failed to observe that one of the additional side effects of the hideously powerful meteorite was to render him soluble in water. He dissolved instantly, and was thereafter incarcerated in a fish-tank in Capitol City Gaoi, at least until **THE DAY IT RAINED DORBOLAK** in *Paragon* 429. The thunderstorm, of course, also washed away the Pedasol, and Paragon was saved.

Life was rarely like this.

Jonah Pringle, meanwhile, having made the decision that his own life was to end, found himself unaccountably jovial. He bought an expensive crystal glass, a morello cherry gâteau, and paid by cheque for a crate of particularly good malt whisky. (At last! he thought. At last I'm getting something done!)

For all his new found resolve, however, Pringle had overlooked the fact that he had never tasted whisky in his life. He was therefore somewhat put out to discover that he hated it. Sitting in his room contemplating only the second glass, he concluded that such a setback rather added insult to injury. Then - Hot Toddy! Wasn't that the name for warm whisky with sugar? Abruptly, depression returned. His only means of heating anything was a kettle, and he did not relish the prospect of asking Eunice Cribble for the use of her kitchen. He sat still for a long time, contemplating her terrible visage. Then he picked up the kettle, and emptied its contents into the washbasin. Taking the half-empty whisky bottle, he began to pour it down the spout of the kettle, a smile on his lips.

He did not remember what song he had been singing while he poured bottles of whisky through the cracks in the floorboards. He did not remember pulling the stair carpet from under Eunice Cribble as she lunged towards him, nor did he remember stripping off, tearing down the curtains in his room and tying one around his shoulders. He had a dim recollection of leaping out of his window, although beyond that things had gone a bit dark. Pringle's next conscious thought was of the excruciating pain in his face, and he commented on this as a plump nurse swam into view. "You were lucky really," she said. "The rose bush broke your fall. But," she giggled, "You broke your nose!" She dissolved into gales of laughter and disappeared, leaving Pringle with the impression that she was not entirely unfamiliar

with the circumstances of his fall.

He sighed noisily, winced, and reached across to a pile of magazines, selecting one at random. It was a bodybuilding magazine, which fell open at an advertisement.

OVER WEIGHT? WROUGHT? THE HILL?

"You'll be **OVER** THE MOON with the **FOX MAITLAND** method. The **ONLY** method to guarantee **YOU** a completely **NEW** body. Study our diagrams, but **DON'T** be convinced! Ring, or better, **VISIT** us at our **ATTRACTIVE NEW FITNESS CENTRE!**"

The plump nurse reappeared with a tray upon which rested a plate of unspeakable goo, yet for the first time in a great many years, a beacon of hope glimmered in the dismal life of Redmond Jonah Pringle.

P ringle never saw Eunice Cribble, or the tiny flat in Painthorpe Street again. His last sight of her and it was in a tiny newspaper article, her beefy arms folded, her face a granite wall. She had denounced him as a degenerate lunatic, whom she had apparently mistrusted from day one. Pringle was surprised. He had spent a goodly proportion of thirteen years with Eunice Cribble, and this subject had never come up.

He read the article in the dingy confines of a small flat, complete with leaking roof and cheap carpet, so worn he had checked to make certain it hadn't been fitted upside down. Pringle was, however, in the grip of an almost hysterical euphoria. He read and re-read the Fox Maitland advertisement, clapped his small hands in glee, and determined to visit the Fitness Centre at the earliest opportunity. Nothing, it seemed, could quell his new-found enthusiasm for life.

Nothing, that is, except the unflinching gaze of a young child who spent the entire bus journey scrutinising Pringle's time worn face (in particular a small crop of warts on his neck). Just wait, you apple-cheeked brat, he thought. You'll get yours. You'll get yours alright. He was still cursing sulphurously as he reached the Attractive New Fitness Centre, which was nothing of the sort.

Large picture window. Self-adhesive lettering. **FOX M TAIN FITNESS NTRE**. Not very good self-adhesive lettering. A sign on the second floor hung at a sickly angle, proclaiming **"HAIRCUT SIRI!"** with



more.

"Would you like to take a seat?" She smiled, evidently not unused to the reaction. Opening the door wide, she motioned to Pringle and walked back to her desk, like no girl ever really did. Veronica Lake, thought Pringle, shocked at the length of his memory. But the beautiful receptionist was a perfect double for the former Hollywood goddess.

Pringle padded across the brilliantly lit white room, his feet sinking into the deep pile coffee-with-cream carpet. He made for a cluster of expensive leather couches at the end of the long room, struck by the disparity of interior and exterior. He sat apprehensively. A panel of amber lights pulsed consecutively above a door, but Pringle was far too preoccupied with Veronica Lake to notice Fox Maitland step out of the lift.

"Excuse me?"

Fox Maitland was far from perfect. Smallish, thinning sandy hair, middle-aged paunch. Without the immaculately tailored tan suit he would have looked remarkably ordinary, and Pringle took an instant liking to the man.

"Jonah Pringle." He shook a dry, firm hand. "I've come across one of your ads, and I'd..." he coughed self-consciously, "like a new body."

Maitland grinned. "That's generally the reason people pay us a visit." His voice was mellow, even, the faint accent mid-Atlantic.

"Like a tour of the Centre?"

"Ah - yes please..."

"Step into the elevator." Pringle watched Veronica Lake as the lift doors closed. She was still smiling at him, and he found that he too was grinning like a maniac. "Good taste in receptionists you've got, Mr Maitland. Very attractive."

"Miss Lake is quite..."

"Lake? Not -"

"Veronica Lake, yes. It's kind of an in-joke."

"Oh I see," said Pringle, not seeing at all.

"Still, I'm sure you'd rather discuss Jonah Pringle," said Maitland politely. "You're not happy with the way you look?"

Pringle's shoulders descended into the lower reaches of his jacket. "You know, I really believe that my appearance has dictated my entire life," he began. "I'm boring! Bloody boring. Always have been. Girls just seem to avoid me. When I was young it was no different - my mother used to tie a piece of meat around my neck so the dog would play with me! It's like I send out subconscious vibrations saying sod off - sod off -" Maitland was now regarding him with faint surprise.

terrible bogus jauntiness, and Pringle realised that the centre must consist of one floor only. Fresh waves of dreadful, dull agony lanced through his nose as he frowned. He stepped inside, staring at his small, black tide-marked shoes. "DON'T be convinced," he said, with heavy irony. "Wait until you've seen the HOT and COLD running cockroaches... the MUSH-ROOMS in the hall... the SILVER-FISH in the vaulting h..."

"Good afternoon! May I help you?"

The girl was perfect. Flawlessly, stomach-wrenchingly, knee-liquifyingly, let-me-die-now-and-let-her-dance-

on-my-gravely beautiful. Spun gold hair swept hauntingly across one side of an apricot soft, lightly tanned, perfectly oval face. Eyes the colour of summer sky and electricity and moonbeams... delicately formed, rosebud lips... dazzling, impossibly regular teeth...

"Hello?" She laughed, and Pringle realised he was gazing stupidly. "Ah, I came about the article in the er - the ad, in - in -" Pringle found that he could no more remember where the advertisement had appeared than he could recite the Mandarin Chinese Alphabet. He decided to gape a bit



"I'm a mess!" he continued. Maitland was silent.

"A nothing! A zero! A human vacuum! I tried to kill myself, you know. Failed! If only I could have been good looking ... I'm damn sure I wouldn't have ended up like this ..."

Unknown to Maitland, this was both the longest and most poignant speech Pringle had given in his entire life. Still, however, he did not react, and continued to study his ranting client with mounting concern. The lift doors had opened, but neither man made to step out.

"I've always been scared, I suppose. That's supposed to leave you as you get older, isn't it? Always been bloody terrified ... I've never had a girlfriend. Ever! My job is turning my brain to Turkish Delight ... I'm forty-eight ... and I've felt like a spotty thirteen year old all my life!" Pringle realised he was shouting and stopped, flushing a deep vermillion. It all sounded so very piffing and trivial, out in the open. He wanted to go home.

"And you believe that by changing your appearance, you could have all the things you missed in your youth?" said Maitland, once the tempest had abated. "Make a success of your life?"

"Don't know," said Pringle, horribly embarrassed.

"I know how you must feel," Maitland continued distantly. Suddenly his eyes looked frighteningly empty and Pringle almost started, but then he spoke again, and the moment was past.

"I wouldn't kid you into believing that your new body will change your life, but if it's what you genuinely want —"

"I do! I do!"

"Okay, fair. You won't be disappointed."

Fox Maitland motioned Pringle into a clinically white corridor, carpeted in the same coffee pile. The warm air seemed almost to throb with an independent life.

"I thought this was a barber's ..."

"We're underground." There was a somewhat loaded silence as Maitland led Pringle down the antiseptic, immaculate corridor. Not daring to speak, Pringle noticed that the gentle throbbing was now a perceptible electrical hum. It seemed to emanate from the room that Maitland was now unlocking, and Pringle was suddenly very afraid. He stared into the room that was like no gymnasium he had ever seen; but not at the walls of gently pulsing white machinery, of

Women.

If Veronica Lake had been perfect, these were ever more so. And for every female there was a male; living

Michelangelo sculptures. All wore brilliant white overalls, all wore benign, beautiful smiles. Like —

"Angels," said Pringle. "Or something," he added, deeply embarrassed again. Maitland studied him with ill-concealed amusement.

"Like to meet a few of my satisfied customers?" He was evidently enjoying the moment.

"How? How is it possible?"

Maitland continued to watch him, smirking, for a moment longer before calling to one of the gods. As the man approached, Pringle noticed that he was at least six feet five. And the face — Newman or Brando? Hauntingly familiar.

"Jonah Pringle, I'd like you to meet Stan Bedford. Stan, Jonah Pringle."

"Wotcha," said a voice like a distant storm.

"Stan is an accountant from Bristol," continued Maitland blithely. "He's sixty-one next June."

Pringle stared at the Newman/Brando face which could not possibly have been over thirty, as a sudden wave of nausea washed over him. It was all, he thought, just a little bit too much.

"Come on, Stan," said Maitland patiently. "We haven't finished yet."

Wordlessly, Newman/Brando flexed his left shoulder. There was the incredibly incongruous sound of crashing gears as he removed and handed his left arm to Jonah Pringle. Pringle watched the coffee tinted, deep pile carpet rush to greet him with alarming rapidity.

OVER WEIGHT? WROUGHT? THE HILL?



Next: Ring In The New!

FREEFALL WARRIORS



COOL BREEZE

THE LATEST DEVELOPMENT IN BIO-ENGINEERING FROM THE LABORATORIES OF BATES MEATS INC. BUT UNKNOWN TO THE EXECUTIVES OF THAT COMPANY, AN EXTRA FACTOR HAS BEEN BUILT INTO THIS ANIMOUS GENETIC CODE: THE "BOLD" FACTOR!



BIG CAT

THE FREE-FALL WARRIORS' MAXIMUM LEADER. ORIGINALLY A MERCENARY FLYER, LEADER OF THE HELLCATS FLIGHT, HE'S CARING, COURAGEOUS AND UNBETRAYABLE. ONE QUALITY SETS HIM APART FROM HIS HUMAN COMPARTMENTS... HE CAN SEE IN THE DARK!



MACHINE HEAD

ORIGINALLY HUMAN, MASSIVE IMPLANTS TRANSFORMED THIS OPERATIONAL HIGH FLYER INTO ONE OF THE MOST DANGEROUS WEAPONS IN THE INTER-VENUS ARMY — A LIVE FIGHTER OF WARFIELD!



BRUCE

PRODUCT OF THE SURGEON-SCULPTORS OF RUBICON, THIS SHARK-FACED WEIRDO STARTED LIFE AS A SUB-REPTILE DESIGNER IN THE BOWSER STABLE OF SUB-SPACE AND FOUNDINGS ON VICTIMS AS THEY PASSED. IN SHORT, A PRIVATE, ONCE WRACKED ON THE PLAINS INTO ONE OF THE MOST DANGEROUS WEAPONS IN THE INTER-VENUS ARMY, HE WAS BESTOWED UPON HIM THE GIFT (OR CURSE) OF INVULNERABILITY IN BATTLE. SEEMS TO HAVE HELP GOOD SO FAR.

OF ALL THE FORCES THAT OPERATED ON THIS GOD-FORSAKEN PLANET, HERE WAS THE MOST RADICAL, THE MOST MYSTERIOUS, AND THE MOST UNCANNY...



THE HIGH-FLYING DIVE FIGHTERS OF WARWORLD.

THEY CRUISED THE UPPER ATMOSPHERE LIKE BARRACUDA IN THE SEAS OF EARTH. TRACKING THEIR PREY WITH LONG-RANGE SENSORS, THEY ATTACKED IN A LONG SILENT FREEFALL DIVE, RELEASED A SALVO OF MISSILES... THEN LEVELLED OUT AT ZERO ALTITUDE...



IT WAS SAID THE FLIERS THEMSELVES WERE MORE MACHINE THAN MEN... BATTLE-MUTILATED VETERANS WITH NOTHING LEFT TO LIVE FOR.

THEIR OPERATIONAL LIFE-EXPECTANCY: NO MORE THAN FOUR WEEKS.

THIS FLIER HAD SURVIVED FOR TWO YEARS. HE KNEW HE WAS LIVING ON BORROWED TIME.

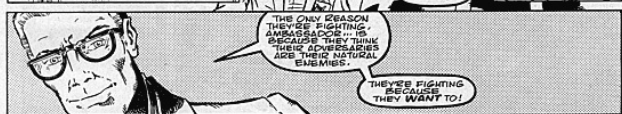
EYES THAT MAY ONCE HAVE BEEN HUMAN SCANNED AN INSTRUMENT PANEL...

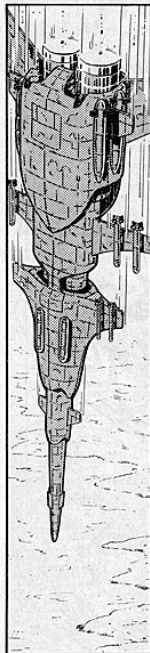


A CAT OUT OF HELL

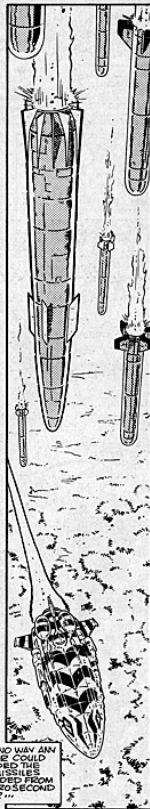
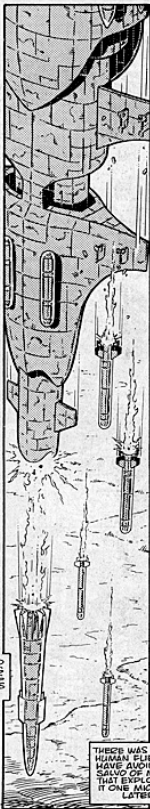
HE HAD JUST DESTROYED A FAST-MOVING CRAFT NEAR THE PLANET'S SURFACE. TWO MORE REMAINED. HE SUMMED UP THE CHANCES OF ANOTHER SUCCESSFUL STRIKE. THE ODDS WERE AGAINST IT...

HE SHRUGGED. A SECOND LATER THE CRAFT DIPPED, DROPPED ITS NOSE TOWARD WARWORLD, AND BEGAN ITS LONG FREEFALL DESCENT.





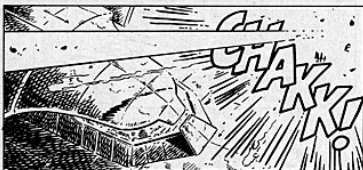
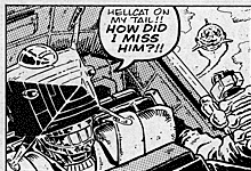
THERE WAS NO WAY HE COULD HAVE HEARD THE PLUMMETING CRAFT, OR SEEN IT FLASHING IN THE SUN A MILE ABOVE HIS HEAD...



THERE WAS NO WAY ANY HUMAN FLIER COULD HAVE AVOIDED THE SALVO OF MISSILES THAT EXPLODED FROM IT ONE MICROSECOND LATER...









"EAST SECTOR UMPIRE
TO I.V. CONTROL, COME
IN, CONTROL."

"GO AHEAD, UMPIRE."

NORTH SECTOR
REPORTS GROUND
TROOPS FIRED ON
BY I.V. DIVISION FIGHTER.
SUBSEQUENTLY DE-
STROYED BY AIR
STRIKE OPERATIVE.
A HELLCAT, TO BE
PRECISE.



"I.V. CONTROL TO ALL UMPIRES:
HELLCATS ARE NOW OUTLAWED
IN THE WAR ZONE. REPEAT
OUTLAWED. IT'S OPEN SEASON.
TARGET PRACTICE FOR EVERY
BODY!"



BUT THERE CAME NO REPLY...
ONLY A COOL BREEZE WIFTED
DOWN THE MOUNTAINS
STIRRED THE JUNGLE FRONDS
... HALTED THE CHATTER OF
BIRDS INTO A FROZEN STILL-
NESS ...

Next:

WHEN WARRIORS COLLIDE!



Every new magazine has at least one agonisingly difficult problem to solve... just what will be the name of its letters page?

For the *Captain Britain* letters section, we've gone from suggested titles such as *Britain Banter*, to handles like *C.B. Feedback*... from the bright and breezy *Brit's Bits*, to the cheerful and chirpy *Cap Chat*... from the utterly plain *The Letters Page*, to the terribly trendy *Rap With The Cap*.

Ahem, yes well... for better or worse, we've settled for *Captain Britain Communications*, and our address is:

23 Redan Place,
Bayswater,
London W2 4SA,
England.



Now that you've read two issues of *Captain Britain*, we're anxious to receive your comments, criticisms, compliments - even your suggestions for a letters page title! We want the *Communications* page to be a lively and entertaining place - but it's going to be all down to you...

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